

(4) Construction of a road from Niranam church to Viyapuram depot.

(5) The taking over by Government of the maintenance of the Tiruvalla-Mepral road already opened by the public.

Lastly, the Member also referred to the necessity for the cutting of a canal connecting the Pamba and Manimala rivers.

Devan's reply.—Government are very thankful to you for the very useful observations and suggestions you have made. Your remarks about the P. W. D. establishment will, I am sure, be considered by the Salaries Committee. That Committee has been appointed to examine the questions of salaries and of the adequacy or inadequacy of the existing establishments in the various departments.

You have made some remarks in regard to the methods of work. I must admit that at present we are doing some unnecessary work in the way of preparing estimates which afterwards become useless on account of altered conditions in regard to cost of materials, &c. As I said in reply to another Member this morning, the whole question resolves itself into one of policy. I think the policy of taking up these works and carrying them out requires a change. There are certain works which must be attended to at all times and in all years, such as arterial communications, buildings of value, Palace works, &c. These apart, the question of selecting new works for construction or improvement requires systematisation. From every part of the country there is a complaint that that part of the country in particular is neglected. This complaint will continue in the absence of a definite policy. Government will take up this matter and see whether some policy cannot be evolved before the next year's budget is framed. Non-official opinion will also be consulted.

You were referring to standard rates. In regard to this, I may say that we have a schedule of rates which is revised from time to time with reference to changes in the cost of materials, wages, &c. I understand that the schedule is not published. I think it is desirable to publish it in the Government Gazette, and I shall ask the Chief Engineer to do so. There are also type designs for the several classes of buildings. Recently, the Chief Engineer has been asked to prepare cheap designs for educational buildings in out of the way places.

There is much force in your observation that there is no Officer in the Secretariat who has the requisite professional knowledge. The matter is receiving the attention of Government.

In regard to the roads constructed by the people which you want the Government to take up, the Chief Engineer will be asked to take them up and maintain them. But there is one point to be remembered. If you make a road without the consent or approval of Government, Government cannot commit themselves to taking over the road for maintenance. If you consult Government in advance and open a new road with their concurrence, Government would be glad to take it up.

67, Means of communication between Quilon and Cochin, with special reference to the Quilon-Alleppey road, Kayankulam-Punalur road, Kayankulam-Chengannur road, and the Kayankulam-Ayirantengu water communication, and diversion of the Kayankulam commercial canal to meet the Kayankulam backwater.

Mr. N. J. Varghese (Member, Trading Classes, Kayankulam) represented that there were at present no good roads connecting the important trade centres, viz., Quilon, Kayankulam, Alleppey and Shertallay with each other, and the port of Cochin, and that consequently trade suffered. He suggested that the contemplated Railway line to Cochin might be taken along the coast taluks so as to pass through the above mentioned centres, and that, if that was not possible, the Quilon-Alleppey road should be completed at an early date and another road constructed from Alleppey to Cochin via Shertallay. He then referred to the Kayankulam-Punalur road and said that it was not being maintained properly and that it should be metalled. The present Kayankulam-Chengannur road was very inconvenient, as they had to traverse a distance of 26 miles, while, if the road was taken through Mavelikara, the distance would come to only 14 miles. There was already a village road, and it only required

to be gravelled. The Member next referred to the Kayankulam—Ayirantengu water communication which was shallow in most places, and to the diversion of the Kayankulam Commercial canal to meet the backwater. In regard to the latter, he said that the present route was dangerous, as it had to pass across the bar, besides being circuitous, and that the diversion would be of great help for boat traffic between Kayankulam and Alleppey.

Deivan's reply.—All these matters are being attended to. I shall see what can be done.

68. Connecting Haripad with Alleppey by a good metalled road.

Mr. P. Sankara Aiyar B. A., B. L. (Member, Municipal Council, Alleppey) first thanked the Government for the broad and statesmanlike outlook they had taken in respect of the importance of communications. He then submitted that the Haripad-Alleppey road formed part of the Quilon-Alleppey road, that on account of its urgency and importance the latter was placed first in the programme of works to be carried out in the Quilon Division, but that, though seven years had elapsed, it was a matter for regret that, owing to the failure to pursue a systematic policy, the work was still incomplete. Out of the seven sections comprising the Quilon-Alleppey road, only two had already been completed and were in good order, works in two were in progress and the remaining three were awaiting funds for execution. The Member prayed that, even if Government could not simultaneously take up all the remaining sections referred to above, at least the Haripad-Ambalapuzha section might be taken up at once and the necessary funds allotted therefor. If this were completed, Alleppey would get a direct motor connection with the Main Central Road.

Dewan's reply.—The whole matter connected with the question of roads will be looked into, as I have already said, before the next budget is taken up.

69. Communications in the Kottayam Taluk.

Mr. K. K. Thomas B. A., B. L. (Member, Kottayam Taluk) observed with satisfaction that Government recognised that the taluks of Central and North Travancore were lagging behind in the matter of communications and that the paramount duty of the State was to promote agriculture and industry by every means in its Power. He represented that the roads and canals in certain parts of the Kottayam taluk were in a very pitiable condition and that measures should be adopted to improve them. He classified his subject under two heads *viz.*, (1) those calculated to benefit agriculture and (2) those directly connected with means of communications. Under the former head, he referred to the necessity for the widening of the Kanjikuzhi canal, constructed 30 years ago with a view to drain off the water that accumulated in the vast area of paddy fields on either side of it. The canal was 10 feet wide and was cut deep through a small ridge of hills, but as the bed of the paddy fields was lower than that of the Minachil river, the fields were submerged about 30 ft. under water during floods and cultivation was seriously affected. The canal should therefore be widened by 10 feet more so as to enable a larger volume of water being drained off by it. By this arrangement, navigation in *valloms* would also be facilitated and the produce could be sent out. The cost of widening the canal would be only Rs. 5,000.

(2) The Member next urged the construction of culverts on the Kodimatha *chira* on the Main Central road between the 92nd and 96th mile and also a bridge on the 94th mile. The Main Central road was at times submerged during floods for want of sufficient outlet for the water, the only existing outlet being the Kodimatha river to which runs a small canal from these fields with a small culvert. A number of culverts should be constructed to drain off the superfluous water that accumulated in the fields. The existing culvert over the canal should also be made into a bridge of 30 feet wide, and the canal broadened and deepened to afford facilities for boat traffic. That would enable the ryots to carry their produce and things required for their fields easier. If the Government found it impossible to carry out these works for want of funds, the people whom he represented would undertake to do the same, if permitted.